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THE TARGUM TO JEREMIAH.

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It may be taken as generally conceded that the Targums, although based substantially on the Massoretic text, yet occasionally show traces of variation. The amount and value of such variation has not yet been definitely settled however, and, in investigating the text of Jeremiah, I have been led to look into the Targum. The results are embodied in this paper.

I have used for comparison the Hebrew text of Jablonsky (Berlin, 1699), mainly, because my copy has a wide margin, convenient for notes. Wherever this paper speaks of M.T. (=Massoretic text) this edition is meant. As this edition has a good reputation for correctness, it may be taken as fairly representative of the accepted Hebrew.

The text of the Targum is notoriously in a bad condition, and the means of correcting it are inaccessible in this country. The printed copies may be arranged in three classes—that of Bomberg repeated in Buxtorf,¹ (b) that of the Antwerp and Paris polyglotts (a), and that of Lagarde,² Codex Reuchlinianus, (r), the oldest known manuscript, at least the oldest that can be dated with certainty. These three have been collated by Cornill in the *Zeitschrift fuer die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1887, pp. 178 sqq. I have relied upon this collation in comparing the Targum with the Hebrew.

The Targum to Jeremiah presents the characteristics of the other Targums. A considerable portion of it may be called a close translation. In many cases, however, it expands by the insertion of words or phrases. In others, it paraphrases or interprets. Instead of figurative expressions, it sometimes gives their direct meaning as understood by the translator. Especially where the Hebrew is obscure it is apt to give a paraphrase, and in these passages it is sometimes difficult to make out the text which the translator had before him. An example or two will illustrate these features. The very first verse of the book will serve. The Hebrew has "The words of Jeremiah, son of Hilki'ah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin." The Targum renders "The words of prophecy of Jeremiah, son of Hilki'ah, of the chiefs of the priests of the prefects that were in Jerusalem, the man who had received his inheritance in the land of Anathoth, in the land of the tribe of Benjamin." I have italicized the additions which

¹ According to Cornill (*Ezechiel* p. 112) Walton's polyglott has Buxtorf's text with the Antwerp translation, "adapted" in places.

² *Prophetæ Chaldaicæ*. Paulus Lagarde e fide codicis reuchliniani edidit. Lipsiae, 1872.

are here quite extensive. It would seem at first sight that a translator who allows himself such liberties could not be relied upon at all. After a little, we see however, that the additions are generally limited to certain cases that can be easily distinguished. The names Judah, Benjamin, etc., are generally preceded by the word *tribe*, as though it were the translator's habit to speak of them in this way. The desire to avoid anthropomorphisms will account for a large number of cases. The *Word of Jehovah* is expanded into *the Word of prophecy from before the Lord*. Where God himself speaks in the first person the Targum substitutes *My Word* (מִימֵרִי). In i. 8, Jeremiah says "Jehovah put forth his hand and touched my mouth," the Targum renders "The Lord sent forth the words of his prophecy and arranged [them] in my mouth." Jeremiah's strong expression (addressed to God) "thou hast surely deceived this people" (iv. 10) is softened into "false prophets are deceiving this people." So where the prophet (under the influence of strong emotion, no doubt) says (xiv. 8, 9), "Why shouldst thou be like a stranger in the land, and like a traveler who turns aside to lodge? why shouldst thou be like a man taken by surprise, like a strong man not able to save?" the Targum gives us "Why should thy wrath descend upon us and *we* be like sojourners in the land and like a traveler that turneth aside to lodge? why should thy wrath descend upon us and *we* be driven about and forsaken when thou art a strong man able to save?" As an example of interpretation in translating, we may notice i. 11. The prophet sees an *almond rod* according to Hebrew. In the Targum he sees a *king watching to do evil*. For a *boiling pot with its face to the North* is put a *king raging like a pot and his army marshalled and coming from the face of the North*. In ii. 1, *thy coming after me in the wilderness* is rendered or paraphrased—that *they believed in my word and came after my two messengers after Moses and Aaron in the wilderness for forty years*. The priests are not allowed to say (ii. 7) "where is Jehovah," but—*let us fear before the Lord*. The *lions* of the Hebrew (ii. 15) become *kings* in the translation. One curious case is where Ebed-Melech, the Cushite, is translated "a servant of King Zedekiah," as though Zedekiah were called the Cushite in derision. These examples, which might be multiplied tenfold without difficulty, will suffice to show the method of the translator. The immediate question is, whether, in spite of the difficulties arising from the method, the Targum is of any real help to us in throwing light upon the Hebrew. In order to answer this question, we must leave out of view all these eccentricities of interpretation and consider only those cases which seem to indicate a various reading. Strictly speaking a variant exists only where the consonantal text is affected. We suppose the Targumist not to have been acquainted with the Massoretic vowel points. In a few cases he pronounced a word differently from what the punctuators indicate. These variants (in a minor sense) may at least be mentioned. We read in vi. 2 "*I have destroyed the daughter of Zion.*" The Targum renders יְרֵמִית by קִלְקִלֶת, apparently taking it as a second person feminine = רְמִית.

The fuller form (with yodh) is found elsewhere in Jeremiah. In II. 13, יְכֹלֶה is translated as though it were יְכֹלֶה (so LXX.); XVIII. 17 for אֲרָאם Targum and LXX. read אֲרָאם; XXIII. 26 נְבִיאִי is translated מִתְנַבֵּן (= נְבִיאִי). This is to be sure a variation in the consonants, but the omission or insertion of a vowel letter is extremely common. In XXX. 13 the noun תְּעֵלָה is translated as though it were תְּעֵלָה; XXXVI. 15, שֵׁב of the Hebrew becomes שֵׁב; LI. 17 "for a lie is his image," the Targum has "for a lie have they cast"—נִסְכוֹ for נִסְכוֹ.

The real variants may be divided into two classes: those in which the Targum agrees with the LXX. and those in which the Targum has not this support. Readings of the former class have a strong probability in their favor owing to the independent nature of their testimony. If I have correctly observed the facts, the Targum and the LXX. agree together as against the M.T. in the following instances: III. 18, "which I made *your* fathers inherit": *their* fathers.¹ IV. 3, "for thus saith Jehovah to the men of Judah and to *Jerusalem*": to the *inhabitants* of Jerusalem. IV. 8, "heat of the wrath of Jehovah": omit *of the wrath*. IV. 26, "from before his wrath": *and* from before. VII. 27, "all these words": omit *all*. IX. 6, "for what shall I do on account of the daughter of my people": on account of *the evil* of the daughter of my people. XI. 19, "let us destroy the tree": *saying come and let us destroy*.² XVII. 13, "and ye shall serve there other gods day and night because I will not show you mercy"—אִשֶּׁר לֹא אֶתֵּן לָכֶם חֲנִינָה. The LXX. has οἱ οὐ δώσουσιν ὑμῖν ἔλεος, the Targum דְּלֹא יְהִי לָכֶן רַחֲמִין. The former points to יִתְּנוּ; of the latter I am not quite certain, though it certainly is not the natural translation of the M.T. We can account for the change from יִתְּנוּ on dogmatic reasons (it seemed to recognize the real existence of other gods),³ and perhaps the same reasons would lead the Targum to make its rendering indefinite. [I, Jehovah] "try the reins and to give" (XVII. 15): omit *and*. "Jehovah hath saved *thy* people" (XXXI.): *his* people. "And they turned to me back and not face *and* to teach [וְלִמֶּד] them rising early and teaching (XXXII. 33) (וְלִמֶּד): LXX. has καὶ ἐδίδαξα (= and I taught them). Targum וְשִׁלַּח לָהֶם לְתַהוּ יֵת כָּל עֲבָרֵי נְבִיאִי which evidently points to the same reading, though so long a paraphrase. וְאֵלֶּמֶד is the original of both and is exactly the form needed. It may have been corrupted by the following וְלִמֶּד. XXXIV. 5, "*and* 'alas Lord' shall they mourn for him": omit *and*. XXXV. 17, "Jehovah *God* of Hosts": Jehovah of Hosts. As I pointed out recently, interpolations of this kind are very frequent.⁴ "All the *former* words which were upon

¹ I put the Massoretic reading first, then, after a colon, that in which the two versions agree.

² In this case the insertion of the word *saying* is almost necessary to the sense of a translation. It is possible, therefore, that both versions put it in without authority from their text.

³ I owe this observation to Professor Stade.

⁴ Even here the testimony of the Targums is not homogeneous, nor is that of the LXX. But on the principle that the versions are more likely to be corrected into conformity with the M.T. than to be changed away from it we may assume the discrepant MSS. to preserve the original especially when two (one from each version) agree.

the former roll (xxxvi. 28): omit the italicized word. To Jeremiah, *the prophet* (xxxvii. 6): omit *the prophet*. This again is a case of frequent occurrence, and although only one edition of the Targum has the shorter text, its concurrence with the LXX. is significant. In xl. 5, the translators seem not to have had our present text before them, and agree in substituting **אם לא** for **עודנו לא** (LXX. *ei δὲ μὴ*, Tar. **ואם לית**). “And Johanan and Jonathan, sons of Kareah” (xl. 8): and Johanan, son of Kareah. xli. 10, “the daughters of the king”: insert *and*. xlii. 22, “with famine”: *and* with famine. L. 11 insert **ו** before the second **כי**. L. 29, both versions agree with the Q^ri in inserting **לה**.

If any reader will look at these passages in his Hebrew Bible I am sure he will find the internal evidence in their favor in every case unless it be the one already noted, xi. 19. To be sure the list is not very large and the corrections are of no great importance. Textual criticism, however, deals with minutiae. The list of passages in which the Targum alone indicates a various reading is larger. It is as follows:

II. 6, “from *the land* of Egypt”: from Egypt. II. 9, “therefore I will *yet* strive with you”: omit *yet*. III. 16, omit **עוד** after **יאמרו** but insert it after **יזכרו**. III. 20, “surely a woman rebels from her companion, so have ye rebelled against me”: surely *like as* [**כמו**] a woman. III. 21, “the weeping of the supplications [**בכי תחנוני**] of the children of Israel”: the children of Israel weep and sigh [**בכו ונאנחו = דכבן ומתאנחין**]. IV. 23, omit **ו** before **הנה**. IV. 29, **כל העיר** makes a difficulty because **בהן** in the next clause refers back to this: **כל קיריהון** is the reading of the Targum; the LXX strikes out the article reading **כל עיר**, showing that both felt difficulty. The latter is more likely to be the original text, and possibly the Targum gives a free translation of this. IV. 30, “lovers have rejected thee”: *thy* lovers—**עגבים** for **עגביך**. VI. 28, “all of them are turning aside to rebels” **כלם סרי סוררים**: all their princes are rebels = **כל שריהם סוררים**. X. 4, “with silver and with gold he decorates it” [**יפהו**]: he *covers* it (reading apparently **חפהו**). X. 8, “the instruction of vanities [**מוסר הבלים**], wood is it”: and because they served vanities—for of what value are they? [**ועל דפלחו לטעוותא ארי למא אנן**]. I suspect the Targumist had a different reading for **מוסר**, though what it was I am not able to say. The latter part of the sentence may be simply a free rendering. X. 21, for **השכילו** read **ישכילו**. XI. 14, “in the time of their crying to me on account of their evil”: in the time when thou prayest for them in the time of their evil—**קראך** for **קראם**, **עליהם** for **אלי** and **בעת** for **בער**. The Targum is the more natural reading, as the prophet has just been commanded *himself* not to pray for the people. XV. 13, “and in all thy borders”: omit *and*. XVII. 1, “*your* altars”: *their* altars. XVII. 3, “thy high places with sin” [**במתוך בחטאת**]: for sins because ye were worshipping vanity. This is a paraphrase, but it seems to point to **במתוך כמותיך**, simply reversing the order of the two words. This would

make the form חטאת regular also. XVIII. 4, כחמר : דטינא pointing to כ instead of כ. XX. 5, "all the treasure of this city": of this land. XX. 6, "and to Babylon thou shalt come" [תבוא]: shalt be led [תובל] probably reading תובא]. XXI. 14, "and I will kindle a fire in her forest": in her city [עיר for יער]. XXII. 3, insert ו before אל-תחמסו. The preceding word ends in ו and the conjunction has probably dropped out under this influence. XXIII. 4, "and shall not be missing" (? ולא יפקרו): and shall not tremble (evidently reading ולא יפחדו). XXIII. 8, "and from all the lands": omit all. XXV. 22, "and to your dreams": and to your dreamers of dreams; so also XXIX. 8 and XXXIV. 3, and this renders it possible that it is simply a case of free translation. XXVII. 20, omit כל. XXIX. 16, "that inhabits this city": this land. XXX. 21, omit את לבו. XXX. 23, insert ו before סער. XXXII. 21, "and with great fear" [מורא]: with a great vision [חזוונא]. The Targum seems to have read or understood מראה. XXXII. 23, insert ו before לא עשו. XXXII. 32, one recension¹ (b) omits כהניהם. XXXIV. 4, for תתקטיל תמות, which would seem to point to תומת. XXXIV. 9, "to lay service upon them, upon a Jew his brother each man" [ביהודי אחיהו איש]. The Targum has יהוראה יהודאי and this is the natural order in Hebrew also. איש, when used distributively as in this verse, generally comes at the beginning of the clause, as in this same chapter elsewhere, v. 10 איש את עברו, v. 14 איש את אחיו. XXXIV. 12, (a) omits the first יהוה, which is certainly redundant in our present text. XXXV. 4, for בני חנן read בן חנן. In XXXVIII. 16, Zedekiah swears by Jehovah who made for us this soul; Targum (r) the soul, which is more accurate. XLII. 10, "if returning ye will dwell" [אם שוב תשבנו], but it is generally the same verb which is found in the infinitive joined with a finite form. The Targum at least feels the difficulty, for it reads תשובו for the second word. The LXX., however, is probably correct in reversing the process and reading ישוב (καθίσταντες). In XLIV. 3, omit המה (b); LXX. omits the last three words of the verse. In XLIV. 6 (ar) insert ו before לשממה. XLVI. 10 ולא. In XLVIII. 30, omit ו from קדם "צבאות": (b) לארני יהוה צבאות. In XLVIII. 31 insert ו before אל אנשי. XLIX. 30, עליכם : עליהם, which is also given as a קרי in Buxtorf. L. 40, for יהוה אלהים read יהוה.

We have then about twenty cases in which the Targum confirms the evidence of the LXX., and about fifty cases in which it alone witnesses to a different text from the one current among us. Probably I have overlooked some instances. But assuming this to be nearly correct, we may say roughly that in seventy passages the Targum helps us to settle the text of the book of Jeremiah. The amount of variation is the object of this inquiry, and until we have a critical edition of the Targum itself this may stand as an approximate result. It does not follow from the fact of variation that the Targum is always correct. That

¹ I have not always specified where a reading was not supported by all copies of the Targum.

must be decided in each instance separately. But the indications already given will show that in a considerable proportion of the passages cited (more than half, I judge) the Targum has preserved for us the better text. At least in settling our text it will not be safe to ignore this version.

As I have already indicated it is not always easy to determine when the Targum had our text. I have carefully excluded a number of cases in which nevertheless a different reading may have existed. Some one else may be able to find clear testimony among these uncertain sounds and I will therefore give a list of *possible variations*.

V. 10, "go up against [or upon] her walls" — בשרותיה, Targum בקרוהא possibly reading בעריה or even בשעריה. But as in the same verse we have "her branches" rendered "her citadels" this may be only an instance of interpretation by the translator. XIII. 17, "my soul shall weep because of pride" [גוה]: because your treasure passes from you—דערי מנכון יקרכון. The only way in which I can account for this translation is to suppose the Targum to have read גוה or בוה. XVI. 7, "and they shall not make them drink the cup of consolation for his father and his mother": each one for his father (inserting גבר = איש). XVII. 2, "their asheras on a green tree": under every green tree (תחות כל for the על of M. T.). If תחת dropped out כל might be changed to על. "We shall take our revenge upon him" (xx. 10): we shall be revenged our revenge upon him. For נקחה the Targum may have read נקמה. "Rock of the plain" (xxi. 13) [צור המישר]: *fortified cities* does not seem a natural translation or even interpretation of these words; it seems to imply עיר מצור or ערים בצורים. In Ps. xxxi. 22 we find עיר מצור. XXVI. 10, "the new gate" is in the Targum the *eastern* gate (so also xxxvi. 10), "And ye shall call me *and shall go* [והלכתם] and shall pray to me" (xxix. 12). For the words in italics the Targum has "and I will hear your prayer" [ואקבל צלותכון]. In xxxviii. 22 והנה: omit ו (b). This is a case where a translator might leave out the conjunction as not necessary to the sense. L. 15, for ידה we find ידיהון. LI. 55, "and will destroy from her a *great voice*" [קול גדול]: *great armies* [משרין סגיאין] which would, barring the plural, stand for חיל גדול. LII. 29, the Targum inserts אנלי before מירושלם [necessary to the sense].

I have not kept a list of the passages where the discrepancy of M. T., LXX. and Targum is so great as to show that no one of the translators was able to make out what his text meant. We should be justified in concluding from such discrepancy that the text has been corrupted beyond present possibility of emendation. This would be only a negative result however. The data which have been presented seem to me to have some positive value.